

# *Italian journalists call for freedom of information regarding Gaza*

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Rome, November 27 (RHC)-- A group of Italian journalists, representatives of media unions and organizations, gathered at the Roman Press Association in Rome to discuss how the genocidal war in the Gaza Strip has been covered with bias by the media.

The initiative was organized by the No Gag Network, a group that advocates for freedom of expression in Italy, as Palestinian and international journalists trapped in the coastal territory continue to be slaughtered by the Israeli occupation forces.

Alessandra Costante, with the Italian National Press Federation, said: "As of today, we don't know if these journalists have been executed or they have been killed in their homes together with their beloved ones during the Israeli bombardments. And I ask you, would that make any difference? It is horrific anyway.

During the meeting, journalists agreed that a war needs field reporting, condemning Israel's refusal to heed calls to allow independent reporters to access Gaza for direct testimony. Since October 9th the 2.3 million residents of Gaza have been experiencing a devastating complete communications blackout.

"Killing a journalist is a war crime, and we call on the International Criminal Court to proceed with the examination into what's happening in Gaza," said Alfio Nicotra, an Italian journalist.

The Italian journalists also re-launched a petition already signed by 200 French, Palestinian, and Lebanese journalists demanding access to Gaza and the protection of journalists covering the Israeli onslaught on the Strip.

"Freedom of expression has been buried under Gaza's rubble, only journalists embedded with the IDF are in Gaza, operating under the preservation of Israeli commanders in the field," stated Luisa Morgantini, former EU Parliament Vice-President.

Speaking of freedom of expression, the future of journalism in Italy looks bleak.

A large number of Italians held a vigil in Rome on last week after a deadly Israeli strike at a Gaza hospital. There has been a big question mark over the credibility of Italian media outlets in recent years as the sharp divide between the mainstream media and a large chunk of public opinion has been growing deeper.

Alessandra Costante, with the Italian National Press Federation stated: "The divide is getting deeper and deeper. Much of the public opinion does not follow mainstream TVs and newspapers anymore. They have totally lost trust in them. And it is understandable. The media keeps seeing the conflict in Gaza started on October 7th."

Meanwhile, Italy's Foreign Minister, Antonio Tajani, has urged Israel to use the four day ceasefire in Gaza to carefully consider what the international perception is of its offensive against the strip.

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